



The University of the State of New York
The State Education Department

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL FOR SCHOOL AND DISTRICT EFFECTIVENESS (DTSDE)



BEDS Code	620600010020
School Name	J. Watson Bailey Middle School
School Address	118 Merilina Avenue, Kingston, NY 12401
District Name	Kingston City SD
School Leader	Julie Linton
Dates of Review	February 19 – 21, 2014
School Accountability Status	Focus School
Type of Review	SED Integrated Intervention Team (IIT)

School Information Sheet											
Grade Configuration	5-8	Total Enrollment	1094	SIG Recipient	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title 1 Population	0%	Attendance Rate	93.166%		
Free Lunch	47%	Reduced Lunch	6%	Student Sustainability	98%	Limited English Proficient	.035%	Students with Disabilities	22%		
Number of English Language Learner Classes											
#Transitional Bilingual	0	#Dual Language	0	#Self-Contained English as a Second Language			6				
Number of Special Education Classes											
#Special Classes	7	#Consultant Teaching		#Integrated Collaborative Teaching			10				
# Resource Room	4										
Number Special Classes											
#Visual Arts	34	#Music	49	#Drama	0	#Foreign Language	20	#Dance	0	#CTE	64
Racial/Ethnic Origin											
American Indian or Alaska Native	.51%	Black or African American	20.6%	Hispanic or Latino	14.8%	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2.4%	White	58.5%	Multi-racial	3.2%
Personnel											
Years Principal Assigned to School	7	# of Assistant Principals	1	# of Deans	0	# of Counselors / Social Workers		5			
Teachers with No Valid Teaching Certificate	0	Teaching Out of Certification	0	Teaching with Fewer Than 3 Yrs. of Exp.		3%	Average Teacher Absences		3.9%		
Credit Accumulation (High School Only) and Performance Rates											
% of 1 st yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 2 nd yr. students who earned 10+ credits		% of 3 rd yr. students who earned 10+ credits			4 Year Graduation Rate		N/A		
ELA Performance at levels 3 & 4	6: 25% 7: 23.55% 8: 25%	Mathematics Performance at levels 3 & 4	6: 14.18% 7: 20.31% 8: 13.45%	Science Performance at levels 3 & 4		Under embargo	6 Year Graduation Rate		NA		

Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA			
X	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino	X	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White	X	Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Math			
X	American Indian or Alaska Native	X	Black or African American
X	Hispanic or Latino	X	Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
X	White	X	Multi-racial
X	Students with Disabilities	X	Limited English Proficient
X	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Science			
	American Indian or Alaska Native		Black or African American
	Hispanic or Latino		Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
	White		Multi-racial
	Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient
	Economically Disadvantaged		All Students
Did Not Meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for Effective Annual Measurable Achievement Objective			
	Limited English Proficiency		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES AS DESCRIBED BY THE SCHOOL:

1. Implementing the new CCSS curriculum/ modules
2. Engaging parents/ guardians
3. Implementing the new block schedule
4. Implementing RtI

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
2.2	The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).			X	
2.3	Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.			X	
2.4	The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.			X	
2.5	Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).				X
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 2:				D	

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
3.2	The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.			X	
3.3	Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.			X	
3.4	The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.			X	
3.5	Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 3:				D	

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
4.2	School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.			X	
4.3	Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.			X	
4.4	Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.			X	
4.5	Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 4:				D	

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
5.2	The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.			X	
5.3	The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.				X
5.4	All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.			X	
5.5	The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.			X	
OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 5:				D	

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

#	Statement of Practice	H	E	D	I
6.2	The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.			X	
6.3	The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.			X	
6.4	The school community partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.				X
6.5	The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning			X	

	and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.				
	OVERALL RATING FOR TENET 6:			D	

School Review Narrative:

Tenet 2 - School Leader Practices and Decisions: Visionary leaders create a school community and culture that lead to success, well-being, and high academic outcomes for all students via systems of continuous and sustainable school improvement.	Tenet Rating	D
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Debriefing Statement: The school leader has created a culture that prioritizes student welfare and a sense of belonging at school. Members of the school community are adapting to the multiple changes introduced this year, including a new curriculum, schedule, and expansion that includes grade five students. Whole-school systems are in the process of being developed, but there is a lack of coordination in the use of data to drive school improvement. This is limiting the school’s ability to communicate its goals and realize high academic expectations.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

2.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that the school community shares the Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Results-oriented, and Timely (SMART) goals/mission, and long-term vision inclusive of core values that address the priorities outlined in the School Comprehensive Educational Plan (SCEP).

- Improvement plans created by the building leadership team (BLT), which includes a small number of parents, demonstrated the schools goals for implementing district changes including the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), Response to Intervention (RtI), the introduction of integrated classrooms, the expansion of the school to include grade five students, and a new block schedule. Although these changes have been shared with the whole school community, there is little evidence for how this comprehensive list will be successfully implemented.
- School goals include a focus on improving student NYS assessment scores. A document review demonstrated that achievement at the school has been declining since 2010, but improvement plans do not indicate how the new curriculum and new instructional practices will be used to address deficiencies and improve student academic performance. There is a lack of accountability or management, which results in inconsistent practices across the school.
- Teachers stated that the school leader and district leaders introduced and reinforce data-driven instruction (DDI); however, a data-driven mission is not comprehensive. For example, while the school leader stated that her involvement in the district analysis of common benchmarking assessments in English language arts (ELA) has given her a good understanding of student achievement in literacy, she does not have a similar understanding of math achievement, as data is not made available to the school.

- In partnership with the district, school leaders have adjusted the goals during the year, such as delaying the implementation of RtI as teachers become familiar with the CCLS. As difficulties with curriculum alignment have emerged, school leaders have encouraged teachers to be flexible in their approach. This has resulted in inconsistent strategies across grade levels and throughout the school. There are few formal checks in place to monitor the effect of these strategies on student achievement.
- The school's vision is not consistently known, which limits student achievement.

2.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders make strategic decisions to organize programmatic, human, and fiscal capital resources.

- The school leader strategized with the district in preparation for the school to expand to include grade five students. This encompassed the creation of a new block schedule with longer blocks designed to allow resources to be used more effectively that the review team found has been advantageous for some students. For example, students in grade eight stated that they have more time to devote to project-based learning. However, there are inconsistencies in the length of the blocks and not all teachers use the longer sessions efficiently. For example, the review team found during classroom visits that some teachers do not plan extended activities to enrich learning during the extended block time. Teachers reported that changes to the allocation of courses mean that some students in grade eight have up to three study halls a day, which further compromises their academic growth. Observations of these sessions by reviewers showed that few students use this time productively.
- The school is beginning to build partnerships that add to the level of expertise in the school and increase opportunities for students. Representatives from Marist College, in connection with the Liberty Partnership, visit to support student academic growth, and a grant through the Girl Scouts is being used to help girls access STEM courses. However, these partnerships are new and are just beginning to impact learning.
- The restructuring involved a number of staff changes. The district has made many of the decisions about appointing grade five teachers, literacy coaches, and specialist teachers to support the integration of students with disabilities. These new teachers commented that the school has welcomed them. The lack of an attendance officer limits the school's efforts to improve attendance and hinders the support that guidance counselors are able to provide in meeting student needs.
- The strategic organization of schedules, staff, and resources are beginning to meet the immediate needs of the school community.

2.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader has a fully functional system in place aligned to the district's Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) to conduct targeted and frequent observation and track progress of teacher practices based on student data and feedback.

- The school leader does not consistently implement a fully functional system aligned to the district's

APPR to conduct targeted observations and track teacher progress based on data and feedback.

- School documents show that a number of staff attended district training on Teachscape to develop their expertise in implementing the APPR. About half a dozen senior school staff follow the district plan to monitor the effectiveness of teachers, so that there are routine arrangements for APPR. However, teachers who have been reviewed commented that there are inconsistencies in the process because the instruments and criteria are being interpreted in a variety of different ways and that only a few have received actionable feedback. Although procedures are in place, they are not having the impact that they should on improving the quality of instruction.
- School leaders have introduced systems for analyzing the information gathered as part of the APPR process. While the teachers identified as needing more support have improvement plans, a review of documents and interviews with the school leader demonstrated that the school leader does not consistently use data from observations to improve practice. For example, while teacher use of questioning and discussion are areas of focus for improvement, PD activities have not been used to address these weaknesses.
- The lack of consistent use of the APPR to improve teacher effectiveness limits student academic achievement.

2.5 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** Leaders effectively use evidence-based systems and structures to examine and improve critical individual and school-wide practices as defined in the SCEP (student achievement, curriculum and teacher practices; leadership development; community/family engagement; and student social and emotional developmental health).

- The review team found that the school leader does not have a consistent and coordinated approach for collecting and analyzing student data to improve instructional practices. Teachers stated that there are limited opportunities for them to analyze student data collaboratively.
- A document review demonstrated that the BLT has a plan to review the impact of the recent changes on instructional practices. However, the focus of the review will be limited to measuring the impact of teachers posting unit and daily objectives to help students gain a better understanding of the purpose of their learning.
- The lack of evidence-based systems to measure and improve school-wide practices limits student achievement.

Tenet 3 - Curriculum Development and Support: The school has rigorous and coherent curricula and assessments that are appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for all students and are modified for identified subgroups in order to maximize teacher instructional practices and student-learning outcomes.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school uses coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the CCLS. There are some opportunities for teachers to collaborate within and across grade-levels to create interdisciplinary curricula, but these structures are not consistent. While some teacher lesson plans meet the demands of the CCLS, there is a

lack of coordination interpreting assessment information and adapting plans to meet the needs of subgroups of students, resulting in limited student achievement.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

3.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures and supports the quality implementation of a systematic plan of rigorous and coherent curricula appropriately aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that is monitored and adapted to meet the needs of students.

- A document review demonstrated the school’s plans to introduce the new curriculum, but did not outline how these changes will impact student achievement and meet student needs.
- Teachers reported that introductory training sessions on the implementation of the CCLS were brief and the materials were overwhelming. Interviews with teachers demonstrated that teachers do not consistently understand the new curriculum and the instructional shifts. While the district offers training on the CCLS, teachers stated that the value of the training is not consistent. For example, teachers stated that the math sessions were helpful, but that the sessions focused on ELA were too general and did not meet their needs in developing their understanding of the new curriculum.
- Evidence from classroom visits showed that teachers have been provided with Expeditionary Learning and EngageNY materials to ensure that lesson plans are aligned to the CCLS. However, teachers stated that they have difficulty using the materials for planning and that they feel overwhelmed by the changes to the curriculum.
- Although school leaders have planned the implementation of the curriculum, PD has been inconsistent in preparing teachers for this implementation. As a result, there has been limited improvement in implementing comprehensive curricula that promotes student academic growth.

3.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers develop and ensure that unit and lesson plans used include data-driven instruction (DDI) protocols that are appropriately aligned to the CCLS and NYS content standards and address student achievement needs.

- While a document review demonstrated that the school provided PD supplemental to the district’s on developing teacher lesson plans aligned to the CCLS, teachers reported that limited time for collaborative planning hinders their ability to develop effective planning practices.
- While teachers shared that support from instructional coaches is helping them make general adaptations to the delivery of the new curriculum, the review team found that these modifications are not data-driven to meet student needs. Further, although teachers stated that using data to plan lessons is important, the review team found limited evidence of teachers using data to plan lessons that meet student needs, as most plans did not target individuals or groups of students.

- Classroom visits demonstrated that teachers do not consistently develop lesson plans that are aligned to the CCLS to meet student needs. For example, during one classroom visit students learned how to analyze text while the teacher used different levels of text complexity to help students draw conclusions at different paces. However, in most lessons, planned activities were not adapted to student needs.
- The lack of consistent CCLS aligned lesson planning limits student achievement.

3.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader and teachers have developed a comprehensive plan for teachers to partner within and across all grades and subjects to create interdisciplinary curricula targeting the arts, technology, and other enrichment opportunities.

- A review of documents demonstrated that the school has begun to address interdisciplinary curricula with the introduction of project-based learning in grades six, seven, and eight in areas such as family and consumer science (FACS), technology, and art. These programs are not extensive as they are restricted to students who are not taking classes in performance, music, or reteach programs. Students in grade five stated that while they have options in FACS and technology, they do not have the chance to do art throughout the year.
- Opportunities for teachers to collaborate to develop interdisciplinary curricula are limited because teachers use team meetings to focus on the implementation of the CCLS.
- Limited opportunities for students to engage in thoughtful cross-curricula activities hinder student success.

3.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers implement a comprehensive system for using formative and summative assessments for strategic short and long-range curriculum planning that involves student reflection, tracking of, and ownership of learning.

- A review of documents demonstrated that while some teachers use formative data, such as student response cards, to plan curricular adaptations for subsequent lessons, this is not consistent across the school.
- A system is in place to identify students for the Kingston Advanced Learning Program, which takes place during the activity period, but only a small number of students are able to attend. Parents and students both expressed their frustration that there are few other opportunities available that challenge students.
- Teachers are in the process of developing a range of assessments, such as Common Benchmark Assessments (CBA) and STAR, to gauge student understanding in relation to the curriculum. However, the review team found that teachers do not consistently align the curriculum to assessment data. Further, the review team found that there is little coordination across grade levels and between teachers to strategically use this data for long-range curriculum planning.

- Some ELA teachers encourage students to review their own work using rubrics, but this is not consistent across the school. Students stated that teachers share their grades with them and that some teachers help them set learning targets. However, a review of student work demonstrated that teacher feedback to students was limited and did not provide specific next steps for students to improve their work and to take ownership of their learning.
- The inconsistent alignment of data and instruction limits student achievement.

Tenet 4 - Teacher Practices and Decisions: Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn, so that all students and pertinent subgroups experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking, and achievement.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school shares clear expectations about appropriate behavior and most classrooms are free from disruption. Teachers are beginning to have conversations about planning to meet the diverse needs of students, but this is inconsistent. As a result, there are few effective learning opportunities for subgroups of students, especially English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

4.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** School and teacher leaders ensure that instructional practices and strategies are organized around annual, unit, and daily lesson plans that address all student goals and needs.

- Teachers stated that school leaders have communicated clear expectations about the use of data, which is leading teachers to begin to use data to plan to meet student needs. However, the review team found that teachers across different grade levels are using their own systems and have different understandings of the expectations of the CCLS. As a result, the needs of student subgroups are not consistently addressed. For example, classroom visits showed that teachers do not consistently adapt texts for ELLs and there are few modifications for students with disabilities.
- Teachers reported that instructional coaches are available to provide them with support as they implement the CCLS. While a review of lesson plans demonstrated most teachers use “I can” statements to frame learning so students are aware of the purpose of the lesson, materials and activities are not developed to promote student thinking. For example, many lesson plans indicated the use of worksheets where students are asked to complete structured tasks rather than to express ideas for themselves and develop complex skills.
- Teachers shared that the district has the long-term goal of a 95 percent achievement rate, but that they are limited in setting short-term goals because of the school’s difficulties sharing data. The

school leader shared that the school is beginning to analyze data across classrooms and found that boys are making faster progress now that there has been a shift to non-fiction texts in ELA. However, the review team found limited evidence of increased progress in other subjects, as departments set their own goals, which limits the impact of the goal-setting strategy.

- Planning procedures to address all student goals and needs are inconsistent as teachers are using generic goals rather than specific and individualized student goals.
- Inconsistent instructional practices limit student academic achievement.

4.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers provide coherent, and appropriately aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)-based instruction that leads to multiple points of access for all students.

- Classroom visits showed that there are inconsistencies in the way teachers use CCLS-based instruction to support learning and provide students with multiple points of entry. The review team found that while a few teachers incorporate instructional shifts in the sequence of activities, so this was not consistent across classrooms and instruction did not meet the needs of individual or groups of students.
- Teachers stated that there was a school-wide expectation that lessons are framed using essential learning questions, but this practice was not consistent and most teachers do not ask higher-order thinking questions. While the teacher in a grade seven class developed student problem-solving skills through questioning on linear equations, most teachers asked questions that required a single word response and did not prompt student thinking.
- The inconsistent application of rigorous instructional practices limits student achievement.

4.4 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** Teachers and students work together to implement a program/plan to create a learning environment that is responsive to students' varied experiences and tailored to the strengths and needs of all students.

- Teachers shared that there is a clear system to promote a common understanding of the expectations for good behavior throughout the school. Students stated that they appreciate the weekly starfish awards they receive in recognition of good conduct or effort. Teachers referred to the ladder of discipline and students stated that they understand that there are consequences for their actions. Students stated that not all teachers respond to behavior in the same way. The review team found during classroom visits that there are few disruptions, but that most instruction is teacher-led with little opportunity for students to engage in conversation or collaborative learning.
- The review team found that teachers do not consistently provide instruction that meets the needs of all students. Further, the lack of assessment information for students with disabilities and ELLs limits teacher capacity in planning to meet their needs. Classroom visits demonstrated that these students are often provided the same materials as the rest of the class. The school has still not

developed a comprehensive strategy for acknowledging the needs of these students effectively.

- As the school moves toward more integrated instruction, groups of teachers are taking opportunities to discuss the individual needs of students, especially those with disabilities. However, teachers shared that they do not consistently have professional expertise in managing integrated classrooms. Evidence from grade meetings showed that they conduct their own research into different learning needs and use this information to decide on particular strategies to support students.
- While the learning environment is physically safe, it does not consistently meet the needs of all learners, which hinders student success.

4.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: Teachers inform planning and foster student participation in their own learning process by using a variety of summative and formative data sources (e.g., screening, interim measures, and progress monitoring).

- Some teachers are beginning to use data to adjust student groupings. For example, a review of documents showed that a few teachers keep running records or use accelerated reading data to organize groups for guided reading. Further, some teachers provide different groups of students with modified learning materials. For example, during one classroom visit, a group of students used manipulatives in math while the rest of the class completed written tasks. However, differentiation is not consistent and in the majority of classes, groups of students were seen completing similar tasks that did not meet their varying needs.
- Teachers do not consistently use data to plan instruction. For example, a review of documents and interviews with staff demonstrated that while teachers are expected to use the STAR literacy ratings to plan ELA lessons, teachers reported that this information does not reflect the current instructional level of students. Further, teachers stated that they avoid using STAR literacy data on a short-term basis because it is not accurate. While exit tickets provide teachers with a focus for subsequent lessons, these assessments are not used consistently to improve student learning.
- Teachers do not consistently provide students with feedback. While during classroom visits one teacher encouraged students to use white boards to respond to her questions in order to measure student understanding of algebraic expressions and provide them with next steps, teachers did not consistently monitor learning and provide students with specific feedback across the school.
- Instruction that is not consistently purposeful and based on data limits student achievement.

Tenet 5 - Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health: The school community identifies, promotes, and supports social and emotional development by designing systems and experiences that lead to healthy relationships and a safe, respectful environment that is conducive to learning for all constituents.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: There is a school-wide vision that promotes student social and emotional developmental health, but systems for students in grades seven and eight are informal. The school is at an

early stage of using data to identify student needs and training staff to address the inconsistent support for student emotional well-being and academic success.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

5.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader establishes overarching systems and understandings of how to support and sustain student social and emotional developmental health and academic success.

- While teachers and students stated that all students are assigned a “go-to adult,” school leaders stated that there are no systems in place to check that every student has a “go-to adult,” but that it’s assumed that since there is overwhelming approval for the system that all students must be using it. During interviews, students explained that they felt reassured by the knowledge that there was always someone they could turn to.
- Documents showed that the school prepared for the expansion to include grade five students with the implementation of an advisory curriculum for grade five and six students based on research into the needs of students moving into middle school. Guidance counselors deliver the course and students stated that they feel well supported. However, guidance counselors reported that this has taken away from them being able to provide consistent support to students in grades seven and eight.
- Teachers shared that there are a lack of systems to support student social and emotional developmental health. For example, there is no attendance officer to monitor student attendance.
- Inconsistent systems to support student social and emotional developmental health limit student success.

5.3 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school articulates and systematically promotes a vision for social and emotional developmental health that is aligned to a curriculum or program that provides learning experiences and a safe and healthy school environment for families, teachers, and students.

- Students reported that they feel supported by school programs. For example, grade eight students shared that they worked on a peer-mentoring program with grade five students making a video about reducing bullying. Students shared that this was of mutual benefit as both groups developed a sense of responsibility for others. However, there is no formal program in place to support the teaching of social and emotional developmental health.
- A few teachers commented that they have taken advantage of PD opportunities related to student social and emotional developmental health offered by the district. These sessions are informative and the school encourages teachers to share their experiences with one another. However, there

are few formal systems for monitoring the impact of the PD on meeting student needs.

- School leaders have implemented a number of curriculum changes this year to meet the needs of students joining the school. However, these changes have been at the expense of other programs that had been running, so student social and emotional developmental health needs are not being consistently met.

5.4 The school has received a rating of *Developing* or this Statement of Practice: All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance of their contributions in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning, and fostering of a sense of ownership for providing social and emotional developmental health supports tied to the school's vision.

- The school's stakeholders are beginning to work together to develop a common vision for supporting student social and emotional developmental health.
- The school leader worked to accommodate incoming grade five students by reconfiguring classrooms so that the younger students would have a safe designated space. Changes to the schedule meant that not all students move through the building at the same time, but when the need arises, there is an increase in supervision to ensure student safety.
- The review team found that members of the school community work together to support students on a case-by-case basis rather than through an overarching system. Discussions with students and parents indicated that they are aware of the school's expectations as to the role they play in helping make the school a safe and healthy place to learn. During an observation of a teacher meeting, it was evident that teachers communicate their concerns about individual student social and emotional health needs. Teachers also encourage families to take advantage of the workshops provided by the district concerning particular difficulties. A few staff commented that they try to support families by attending the workshops with them.
- The school community is developing a formal system for discussing and responding to student social and emotional developmental health needs. Teachers collaborate informally to share their concerns about groups of students, and guidance counselors respond with impromptu sessions for these particular groups. For example, during interview discussions guidance counselors explained how they had been asked to help students resolve a dispute within a class in order to prevent relationships from deteriorating. Students' perception is that there has been a reduction in bullying incidents.
- Stakeholders are developing their understanding of the importance of their roles in supporting student social and emotional developmental health in order to increase student success.

5.5 The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice: The school leader and student support staff work together with teachers to establish structures to support the use of data to respond to student social and emotional developmental health needs.

- Documents showed that the school leader and support staff have established plans for improving

the way in which the school monitors the social and emotional developmental health of students. For example, plans are in place to formalize student surveys to establish a comprehensive view of the concerns and issues faced by students across grade levels. However, there is not a consistent use of available data on behavior incidents, attendance and academic data to identify and meet the needs of all students. Not all staff has the confidence and expertise to make best use of data to plan strategies to better promote the academic and social success of different groups of students.

- There are instances where members of the school community are beginning to use data to target groups of students for extra support. For example, staff members running the activity period have started the “Green Team” mentorship program as a means of identifying students in need of additional support.
- The inconsistent use of data to support student social and emotional developmental health needs limits student success.

Tenet 6 - Family and Community Engagement: The school creates a culture of partnership where families, community members, and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being.

Tenet Rating

D

Debriefing Statement: The school has made efforts to engage families and the community in supporting student academic and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and community agencies are not sufficiently involved in school planning and governance to meet the diverse needs of all the students. As a result, the home-school-community connections are limited in contributing to the development of student social, emotional, and academic success.

Strengths:

All ratings for this Tenet are **Developing** or **Ineffective** and therefore comments are listed under **Areas for Improvement**.

Areas for Improvement:

6.2 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school leader ensures that regular communication with students and families fosters their high expectations for student academic achievement.

- The school leader does not consistently ensure that regular communication with families fosters high expectations for student achievement. Parents shared that the school does not always articulate its expectations for student achievement.
- The SCEP prioritizes improving communication with parents and increasing the number of parent engagement activities this year. These activities include grade eight guidance counselors working with parents as they prepare students to transition to high school. However, the parents involved in school planning shared that the majority of the decisions seemed to have been made in advance of their consultation.

- The school community publicizes district workshops that support the academic achievement of subgroups of students. For example, the website includes links to the district-run autism support group. However, parents shared that these workshops are not well attended. Students explained that parent work commitments often prevent them from attending events, but that parents do support their sports games and competitions.
- Interviews with the school leader demonstrated that the school prepared students and parents entering middle school. Parents stated that workshop sessions were helpful, but that the level of communication regarding expectations has not been sustained as their children have faced a number of different challenges throughout the year. There is an imbalance in the information that the school communicates with parents with a greater emphasis on sharing details associated with student behavior.
- The review team found that the school has not evaluated its communication with parents in order to improve its strategies for fostering high expectations for achievement.
- The inconsistent relationship between the school and families limits student achievement.

6.3 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school engages in effective planning and reciprocal communication with family and community stakeholders so that student strength and needs are identified and used to augment learning.

- A review of documents and interviews with staff and parents demonstrated that the school communicates with families through parent-teacher conferences, report cards, and the “Paw Print” newsletter on the website. In addition, parents stated that some teachers communicate with families as the need arises. Further, the school leader shared that there is an open door policy at the school.
- The school is developing a system for communicating with families in their own language. Bilingual staff members translate some information as needed. Teachers explained that the bilingual family worker meets with families to address student needs. In addition, the school has software on the website that enables families to translate sections that they choose to translate. However, this relies on families being able to access and select the information they would like to translate. Further, the grade five newsletter was printed in English only, though teachers stated that there are plans to translate the document for all families.
- The school has not evaluated its communication strategies, but parents stated that the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is working on a plan to analyze the effectiveness of the school’s communication with families.
- Inconsistent school communication with families limits the ability of parents to support their children’s academic and social growth and hinders student success.

6.4 **The school has received a rating of *Ineffective* for this Statement of Practice:** The school community

partners with families and community agencies to promote and provide training across all areas (academic and social and emotional developmental health) to support student success.

- The school does not consistently partner with families and community agencies to provide training to support student success.
- A review of documents and discussions with the school leader demonstrated that the school leader has plans to develop its relationships with SUNY New Paltz to provide parents with training to support their children's learning. While the school has encouraged parents to make use of district events to help them understand the expectations of the CCLS, the school has not provided parents with their own training to support student success.
- While the school is addressing changes to the curriculum and forging new relationships to support student achievement, the school has not provided PD for staff on how to build and sustain strong and productive relationships with parents and families.
- Limited home-school relationships hinder student success.

6.5 **The school has received a rating of *Developing* for this Statement of Practice:** The school shares data in a way that promotes dialogue among parents, students, and school community members centered on student learning and success and encourages and empowers families to understand and use data to advocate for appropriate support services for their children.

- The school does not consistently use data to promote dialogue with parents in order to support student success.
- With the introduction of the CCLS, there have been changes to systems for reporting student achievement and progress to families. However, parents shared that these changes were not well communicated and that they have difficulties understanding the information in regard to their children's progress. Further, some parents stated that the school did not contact them in a timely manner about their children's low level of achievement.
- Although the school provides data to parents, they do not consistently ensure that families are able to understand this information in relation to their children's academic growth. As a result, some families feel there are unnecessary delays in responding to their children's academic needs.

Recommendations:

Tenet 2: School Leader Practices and Decisions

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 2 the school should:

- 2.2: Ensure that school goals set out the improvements necessary to rapidly improve the achievement of all subgroups of students in measurable phases throughout the year, and hold teachers accountable for a coordinated strategy to fulfilling these goals.
- 2.3: Review the block schedule in collaboration with teachers so that there is more parity in it for different grades and agree on expectations for optimizing learning during longer sessions. Ensure that there is a clear expectation that partnerships have a measurable impact on raising student achievement and implement regular checks to ensure that the benefit is sustained.
- 2.4: Confirm expectations for evaluating the quality of instructional practices using the APPR systems so that teachers have confidence in the system. Ensure the system includes accountability checks to determine the extent to which teachers act on the feedback they receive. Implement more rigorous systems for collecting and analyzing the information gathered during these processes so that findings can be used to inform relevant PD activities.
- 2.5: Create SMART goals, which clearly show the measurable impact of changes to instructional practices on student achievement. Ensure that progress towards these goals is routinely reviewed and that teachers are held accountable for achieving them.

Tenet 3: Curriculum Development and Support

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 3 the school should:

- 3.2: Ensure that mechanisms are in place for teachers to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of all subgroups of students.
- 3.3: Ensure that teachers meet routinely to monitor the impact of the curriculum and that they are held accountable for making relevant and timely adjustments to improve the rate of student academic growth.
- 3.4: Review interdisciplinary curricula to ensure that there is equality of opportunity in the program and that students are able to maximize learning time in all classes, including study hall.
- 3.5: Ensure that there is a coordinated approach toward using data to determine the feedback necessary to guide students to make progress, as well as qualitative measures so that there can be a clearer focus on the skill development necessary to improve their achievement.

Tenet 4: Teacher Practices and Decisions

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 4 the school should:

- 4.2: Introduce a strategic approach to goal setting to raise student achievement by planning a variety of learning activities and materials that develop student skills and supports the different learning needs of subgroups.
- 4.3: Ensure that lesson materials are modified to include multiple points of access for students with different learning needs and that questioning is used to engage, motivate, and challenge students.
- 4.4: Use data more effectively to determine the nature of the support needed by different subgroups of students.
- 4.5: Ensure that assessments are used regularly to check student progress so that teachers have an accurate view of student academic growth and skill development.

Tenet 5: Student Social and Emotional Developmental Health

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 5 the school should:

- 5.2: Ensure that support systems are equitable for all students and that the impact of support strategies are monitored and evaluated for how they bring about improvements in student academic and social success.
- 5.3: Ensure that there are robust systems for monitoring the impact of PD and adjusting to emerging teacher needs in a timely way.
- 5.4: Ensure that a program for teaching social and emotional developmental health is introduced and that teachers are equipped with the skills to implement the program consistently across the school.
- 5.5: Formalize the systems for gathering data about student social and emotional developmental needs so that there are routine mechanisms for monitoring the impact of school systems and making timely modifications where necessary.

Tenet 6: Family and Community Engagement

In order for the school's strategy and practices to align with the concepts in the Effective column of Tenet 6 the school should:

- 6.2: Ensure that parents are involved in decision making processes so that they are better able to influence the type of activities that optimize their involvement in improving their children's academic growth. Ensure that parents are fully aware of the school's academic expectations.
- 6.3: Implement more inclusive policies for communicating with parents, particularly in support of student academic needs, so that all documents leave the school in the variety of languages necessary for all parents to access information without additional support.
- 6.4: Ensure that teachers contribute to improved communication systems about how parents can support their children's learning and provide PD for staff on how to build and sustain productive relationships with parents.
- 6.5: Create opportunities for representatives from across the parent body to become more actively involved in decision-making processes and ensure that systems for communicating information about student academic achievement are accessible to all parents and that the information provided is easily understood.